

THE PENDING CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, in a bidding system with which trading partners present their bidding prices via a network, in response to a matter presented by a buyer company, comprising:

a trading partner database for storing data representing capabilities of the trading partners, in numerical form; and

a controller arranged to read the data on the trading partners represented in numerical form, from the trading partner database, on receiving the bidding prices and to select a trading partner or trading partners for the matter, based on the bidding prices and the data represented in numerical form.

2. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 1, wherein the data representing capabilities of the trading partners, in numerical form, stored in the trading partner database are data representing capabilities of the trading partners on a plurality of estimation items, in numerical form, based on any of information on the trading partners, obtained from the trading partners, information concerning estimation of the trading partners, kept by the buyer company and business information concerning the trading partners, obtained from external credit-ranking agencies.

3. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 1, wherein the controller is further arranged to weight the data indicating capabilities of the trading partners, in numerical form, according to an article

subjected to the bidding and to select a trading partner or trading partners for the matter, based on bidding prices of the trading partners and the weighted data represented in numerical form.

4. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 3, wherein the controller is further arranged to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to add the price difference represented in numerical form to the weighted data represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the addition.

5. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 3, wherein the controller is further arranged to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to multiply the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

6. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 1, wherein the controller is further arranged to choose a selecting routine from a plurality of predetermined selecting routines, according to an article subjected to the bidding and to select a trading partner or trading partners for the matter by executing the chosen selecting routine.

7. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having the highest value of the weighted data represented in numerical form.

8. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to add the price difference represented in numerical form to the weighted data represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the addition.

9. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to multiply the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

10. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a

selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having presented the lowest bidding price among the trading partners having a score of the weighted data represented in numerical form, higher than a predetermined one.

11. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having the highest value of the weighted data represented in numerical form provided that no trading partner has presented a bidding price equal to or greater than the target price.

12. (Previously Presented) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner by a system comprising a database storing data representing capabilities of trading partners, in numerical form and a controller, the method comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

receiving bidding prices from the trading partners;

reading data on the trading partners, in numerical form, from the trading partner database; and

selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter based on the received bidding prices and the read data represented in numerical form.

13. (Original) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, wherein the data representing capabilities of the trading partners, in numerical form, stored in the trading partner database are data representing

capabilities of the trading partners on a plurality of estimation items, in numerical form, based on any of information on the trading partners, obtained from the trading partners, information concerning estimation of the trading partners, kept by the buyer company and business information concerning the trading partners, obtained from external credit-ranking agencies.

14. (Previously Presented) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

weighting the data representing capabilities of trading partners, in numerical form, according to an article subjected to the bidding; and

selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter, based on the bidding prices and the weighted data represented in numerical form.

15. (Previously Presented) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 14, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

representing a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form;

adding the price difference represented in numerical form to the weighted data represented in numerical form; and

selecting trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the addition.

16. (Withdrawn) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 14, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

representing a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form;

multiplying the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form; and

selecting trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

17. (Withdrawn) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

choosing a selecting routine from a plurality of predetermined selecting routines; and

selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter by executing the chosen selecting routine.